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veterinary economics

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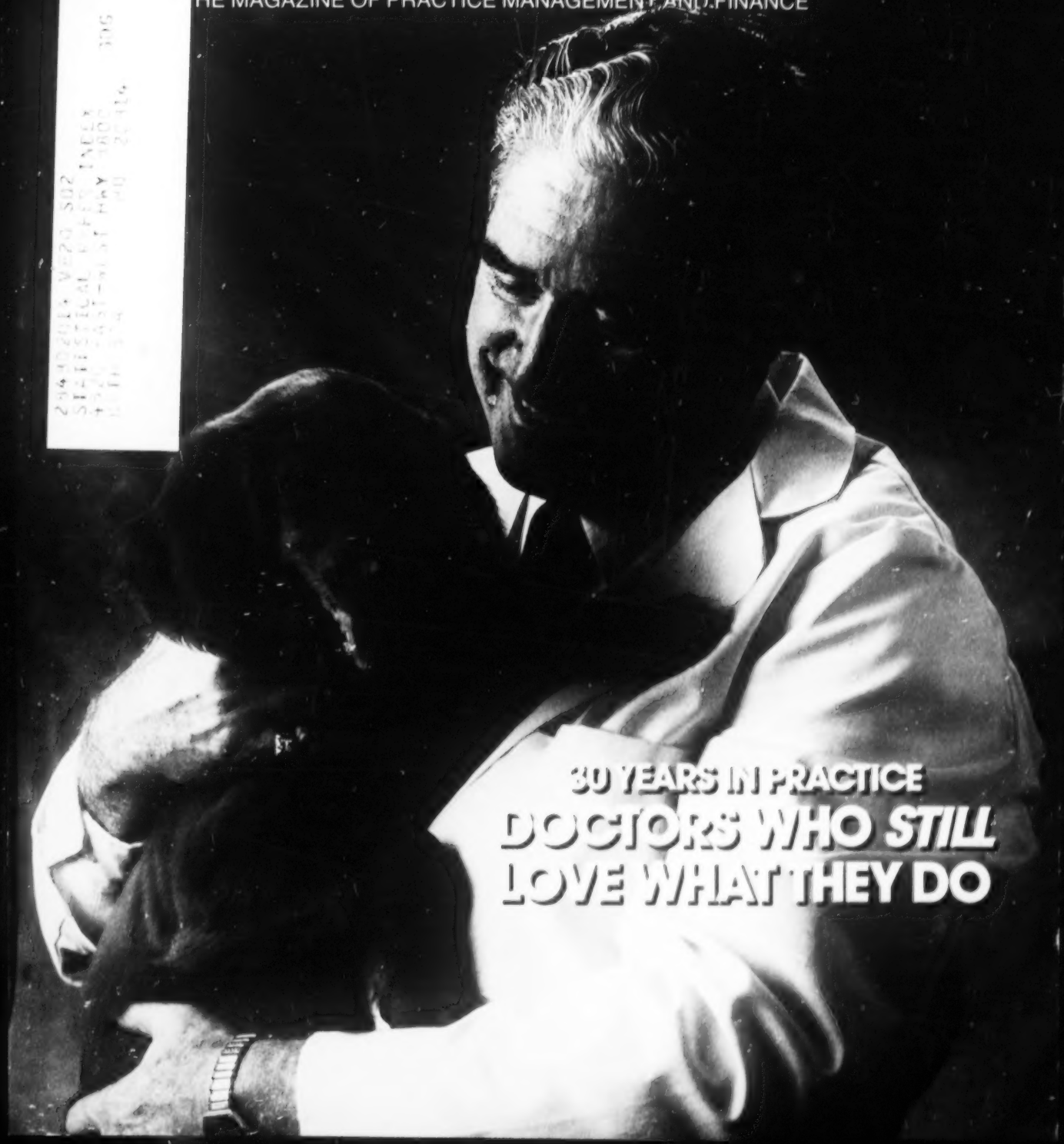

30 YEARS IN PRACTICE
DOCTORS WHO STILL LOVE WHAT THEY DO

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MEMO FROM THE EDITOR

The glass is half *full*

Last month, the cover of SELF magazine announced: "Be An Optimist In Two Weeks." The pessimist in me said, "Yeah, right," but the optimist said to buy the magazine anyway. I discovered inside some interesting research on the power of hope and optimism, and I decided that *our* cover title could very well have said the same thing.

The SELF article states that optimists tend to maintain their youthful vigor longer—and there's no denying that the doctors interviewed in this issue are optimists. As the saying goes, they consider the glass half full rather than half empty, and their positive attitude keeps them pumped up about veterinary medicine at a time when being a pessimist might be an easier and more acceptable route to take.

Lest you consider these doctors products of the so-called "good old days," keep in mind that attitude is ageless—and that a change in yours can make a difference no matter how old you are, or how bad the economy or the competition is at any given time. Research shows that the optimistic life is a healthier one, as pessimists are sooner to come down with heart disease, high blood pressure, or cancer. In other words, the sooner you start to see the bright side of things, the better.

Psychologist Martin Seligman says: "The pessimist believes that bad things are permanent, pervasive, and unchangeable. The optimist, by contrast, believes that bad things are temporary, specific, and changeable." And in his article on negativity (page 46), Don Dooley points out that the heat is on to *be* a pessimist—but that doesn't mean you have to succumb to it. You can *choose* hope over despair, and in doing so, you'll help yourself and your practice.

Czechoslovakian playwright, president, and Nobel Laureate Vaclav Havel says that, "Hope is an orientation of the spirit, an orientation of the heart. It is . . . the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out."

I hope you believe it.

Becky Turner

Rebecca R. Turner

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TOP-FLIGHT CLIENT SERVICE—JAPANESE STYLE

In Japan, the value of customer service isn't just preached by company executives, it's pushed in comic books as well—and the public is hooked on them. Called *monga* in Japanese, the books are actually picture stories with words—WASHINGTON POST reporter T.R. Reed compares them to seri

Speaking on National Publi he business stories are especially compelling, because s is not to get rich or to be promoted, but to serve th

In the book "Hotel," plains to the front-desk clerk of a large hotel tha t desk, and claims that the hotel has lost it. Alt dn't lose the envelope, he apologizes profuse places he frequented during the day before h

During the night, the h r the envelope, and find it in the bathroom of a bu siness meeting.

The next day, it dawns o velope across town—and that it's lost forever. Unable t erk, however, he again complains about the hotel's "mistak pologizes, then hands over the envelope, saying, "You were right, s e fell off the front desk. It was completely my fault."

The final scene shows the other hotel employees congratulating the clerk on his handling of the situation. It appears that even in Japanese fiction, the customer is king.

—By William Padgett, Editorial Intern

A LOOK AT RECESSIONARY BLUES AND BUCKS

Thanks to the recession, "stress is running like fire through the American work place," says Peggy Lawless, project director for a recent survey of 1,299 employees. The survey, conducted by Northwestern National Life Insurance, shows that 46 percent are worried about their jobs and feel pressured to prove their worth because of the country's economic slump.

About 65 percent say they suffer from exhaustion, insomnia, and other ailments. When asked about burnout, 36 percent of women and 28 percent of men say they are candidates. Those especially at risk? Low-income employees and single women with children.

A survey of 1,200 employers, conducted by Hewitt Associates in Lincolnshire, Ill., indicates that the squeeze on employees is likely to worsen: 5 percent of the employers plan no pay increase for salaried employees, and 3 percent will freeze hourly employees' wages. Others plan to give smaller raises than earlier projected.

ANIMAL PRODUCT SALES SHOW HEALTHY GROWTH

Despite the recession, total U.S. sales of animal health products jumped approximately 12 percent in 1991, according to a report from the Animal Health Institute (AHI). In 1991, sales rang in at more than $2.2 billion, compared to $2.0 billion in 1990.

Sales data from the AHI also shows that:

- Feed additive sales shot up approximately 13 percent in 1991, with projected sales of more than $595 million. Sales in the antibacterials subcategory notched a 13-percent increase, and rose 11 percent in the "all other" subcategory.
- Pharmaceutical sales gained almost 11 percent in 1991, with projected sales of nearly $1.3 billion. In the antimicrobials subcategory, sales increased approximately 7 percent; in the "all other" subcategory, sales were projected to grow 12 percent.
- Biological sales posted a healthy 12-percent gain in 1991, with projected sales at nearly $347 million. The subcategories showed the following increases: 16 percent for livestock, 4 percent for poultry, 7 percent for small animals, 9 percent for equine, and 21 percent for rabies.

As you'll see in the chart below, research and development is on the rise as well, with AHI member firms reporting that they spent more than $400 million on potential new products in 1991—a 5-percent increase over 1990. Of this total, 87 percent was spent on innovative research (funds spent in the search for new products) and 13 percent on defensive research (work done to defend the continued use of approved products). ■